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ABSTRACT

This study examined the methods used to improve and increase the efficiency of early childhood foreign language education through movements and speech in play situations. The goals of the study were (1) to devise an adaptable model for variable situations in early childhood foreign language education through playing motoric games, and (2) to investigate the basic prerequisite and indices for enhancing the quality of such education through motoric games. The subjects were 14 teachers and 183 4- to 6-year-old children. The results of assessment of foreign language knowledge, cognitive activities, and relation to education process as outcomes of the games suggest that the model was successful in enhancing children's ability to gain a larger and deeper knowledge of the second language and form good language skills. The competitive character of the games and the movements during play helped the children remember the foreign language words and phrases and to use them on their own. Based on the results, it was concluded that the playing situations also improved children's abilities to practice the acquired knowledge and skills in other conditions. It was also concluded that the motoric games improved children's harmonious development as well as their cultural knowledge. (MOK)

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ED 397 957

A Model of Early Childhood Foreign Language Education through playing motoric games

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Reasons

Mastering at least two foreign languages appears to be a necessity in the child's development nowadays. We assert this on the grounds of the following circumstances:

1. The enlargement of the international contacts and the necessity of early childhood foreign language education.

2. The availability in each country of children with a mother tongue different from the official lanquage spoken in the country, necessitates learning of more than one language.

3. Pre-school age appears to be the initiating period for gaining speech and movement proficiency and for the optimum development of the child's personality.

Many factors orientate us to solve the problem of initiating 4-6-year-old children into foreign languages in an easy to understand and effective way. The incentive for making the experiment is determined by the following premises:

1. Pre-school age is a sensitive period for education, development of psychomotoric processes and gaining proficiency in language speaking (6; 71).

2. There is an auspicious dependence between the motor and the language activities which is due to the irradiation of the agitation in the mind sent from the motor centre towards the adjacent language centre (3,114).

3. The games create coditions for variable situations in the processes of education and initiating into the foreign language. Playing games are a natural necessity for the children to get acquainted with the environment for the process of education and for the creative work on their own. The utilizing

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of the motoric games in the sensibilization of the children to the foreign language depends on the teacher's attitude, qualification and creativity (7;7).

The problems which need to be solved totally refer to: the teacher's professional qualification, the possibility of realization, the conditions for work, the initiation of new pedagogical methods, the syllabus, the children's motivation, the evaluation of the children's knowledge and skills, the children-teachers, children-parents, children-society, shildren-nature interactions. It is extremely necessary the methods of the early childhood foreign language education to be enriched in correspondence with the changes in society.

The hitherto existing methods comprise using songs, games, poems. But the utilizing of movements and playing games is rather small (1; 2; 4). To make the early childhood foreign language education more available and engrossing for children it is necessary to bring in natural movements and motoric games in it.

Aims and objectives

Our concept is that in playing situations there are psychological, physiological and pedagogical prerequisites for efficient initiation of preschool age children into foreign language education. Through playing games and creating positive emotional adjustment and motivation, independent energetic activity is provoked. In this way important personal necessities for acquaintance with real life as well as with universal and national values are induced and satisfied. The connecting of the movement with the world, the phrase and their meaning leads to gaining proficiency in the foreign language according to the age abilities of the children.

The aim of the research is: to improve the methods and increase the efficiency of the early childhood foreign language education through activizing the movements and the speech in playing situations.

Objectives:

1. Suggesting an adaptable model for variable situations in early childhood foreign language education through playing motoric games.

2. Investigating the basic prerequisites and indices for enhancing the quality of the Early Childhood Foreign language education through playing motoric games.

Methods:

Applied scientific research has been canied out in nursery schools in Bulgaria since 1991. Fourteen teachers and 183 children aged 4-6 were included in the research. The basic functions of the applied model are: univer-

sality, actuality, perspectivity, adaptability, simplicity, attractiveness (fig. 1). The sensibilizing of the children to the foreign language is carried out in three levels of education.

Level 1: Initiating into the foreign language through a system of topics including playing games in language lessons.

Level 2: Transferring language knowledge to other children's activities.

Level 3: Independent utility of foreign language knowledge and skills in playing games

The model for initiating into a foreign language through playing motoric games is given in table 1. It comprises twelve topics and the relevant playing motoric games.

Topics:

1. I discover the riches of the world with the help of the foreign (French) language.
2. Who am I?
3. My family.
4. My friends - children, animals (pets), plants, toys.
5. The Seasons.
6. My birthplace.
7. I play sports.
8. My mother country.
9. My favourite occupation (job).
10. Holidays - in my country and in other countries.
11. I like travelling.
12. I am going to be a pupil.

Organisation of the educational process The children are supposed to acquire 120 active vocabulary units and 30 passive vocabulary units. Each vocabulary unit denotes a specific concept. Each topic is supposed to comprise 15-20 vocabulary units and each lesson 3-5 vocabulary units.

The acquisition of language knowledge and the formation of skills in the language and the motor activites are accomplished both in a spiral and concentrically. The time for the suggested topics and the number of the lessons depend on the conditions of work as well as the teacher's preference. It is desirable that the lessons last 30 minutes if conducted twice a week or 20 minutes, if conducted 5 times a week.

Criteria and indices for evaluation

1. Foreign language knowledge.

1.1.Phonetic rules.

1.2. Vocabulary.

1.3. Grammar structures.

1.4. Application of the acquired knowledge in other situations.

2. Cognitive activites

2.1. Language practice in the game.

2.2. Motor activites - volume and intesity measured by motor consistence, number of steps, duration and pulse rate.

3. Relation to the educational process.

3.1. Willingness to take parf and do the task.

3.2. Emotional satisfaction during the activity and after finishing it.

The criteria and the indices are given account of for both the children and the teacher. For generalizing the results an alternative analysis and the representative error are taken into consideration.

In the preliminary investigation the model of foreign language education through playing games is applied to children with a mother tongue different from Bulgarian. This paper shows the way the model is used to teach French to Bulgarian children. The basic topics, the playing motoric games and the technology of its realization are universal and can be applied for initiating the children into other foreign languages.

Results

All that has been done ends with good results because of the methods applied. The data about the quality and quantity analysis show the enhanced children's abilities to gain a larger and better knowledge and form good skills in the Early Childhood Foreign Language education through playing games (Table 2, Fig. 2). The subject, the arms, the contens, the roles and the course of the playing motoric games transfer the children to a real life or imaginary situation. The competitive character of the games and the movements while playing help the children remember the foreign language words and phrases in a natural way and use them on their own.

The facts of the experiment disclose some special features which can be seen in table 2. The professional competence of the foreign language teacher favourably influences the process of learning pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar structures as well as their application by the children. The teacher's adjustment and emotional satisfaction are little. The high criteria of self-evaluation and the teacher's desire to become perfect account for that. The same indices - the adjustment and the emotional satisfaction are bigger with children because of the special characteristics of the playing of motoric games.

The teacher's qualification, the teacher-parents relationships as well as their agreement are the reasons for the efficiency of the Early Childhood Foreign Language Education. The playing games suggested in this paper

are good for the children's sensibilizing to the foreign language and the development of their psychomotoric abilities.

Conclusions

1. The quality of the child's sensibilizing to the foreign language and the quality of the physical education increase.

2. The foreign language education through playing games develops the motivation of pre-school age childrenas well as their interest in the foreign language.

3. The playing situations increase the speech and motor activites and improve the children's abilities to practice the acquired knowledge and skills in other conditions.

4. The initiating of the foreign language through playing motoric games helps the harmonious development of the children as well as their cultural knowledge.

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Table 1 **Model of teaching French as a freign language through playing games**
I play and learn French with pleasure.

Communication 1	Vocabulary 2	Pronun-ciation 3	Structures 4	Playing Games 5	
				Situation (S):	**La situation (S):**
Topic 1: I discover the richness of the world with the help of the foreign (French) language					
Greeting	Greeting	(u)	Salut!	***S: A letter from Paris***	***S: Une lettre de Paris***
Addressing	Addressing	(i)	Bonjour/Au revoir	1. On the bridge	1. Sur le pont
Apologiring	Apologising		Bonne nuit!	2. The warning bell	2. La cloche d'école
Thanking	Thanking		Madame/Monsieur	❁ 3. Tag with a ball	❁ 3. Poursuite à la balle
Giving			Excusez-moi	A 4. Airplanes	A 4. Des avions
orders			merci	I 5. Relay game. Excursion	I 5. Jeu de relais. Excursion
			Levez-vous!/Asseyez-vous!	6. Good morning	6. Bonjour
			Ouvrez/Fermez + substantif	7. The Door	7. La porte
			Voulez-vous + verbe?	8. Living circles	8. Des cercles vivants
			Faites attention!	9. Day and night	9. Jour et nuit
				10. The Parrot	10. Le perroquet
				11. Air, Earth, Water	11. Air, terre, eau
				12. Flies. flies	12. Vole, vole
				13. A special delivery	13. Une poste par exprès
Topic 2: Who am I?					
				S: Alt a party	***S: En visite***
Introducing	Name, surname	(y)	Je m' /il/ elle s'appelle	1. Jeahn is dancing	1. Jean qui danse
myself	Parts of the body	(i)	C 'est le/la	2. The shower	2. La douche
Describing			Ce sont les	3. Trot, trot, little, feet	3. Tapent, tapent, petits pieds
Describing	Health	(z)	+ partie(s)du corps	4. Merry-go-round game	4. Le caroussel amusant
the state	Numbers (1-5)	(s)	je/tu/il/elle	5. Knock-knock	5. Toc-toc
of my health			+ avoir mal à la/au +	❁ 6. This is...	❁ 6. C'est...
Characterising			partie du corps	❁ 7. Names	❁ 7. Les prénoms
myself			Comment ça va?	B 8. The ship	B 8. Le bateau
			Bien /mal/ très mal	I 9. Run, bring, count	I 9. Cours, transporte, compte!
			j'ai /il/ elle a	10. Getting acquainted	10. Faire la connaissance
			+ âge	11. (The) fire	11. L'incendie
			+ substantif	12. How old are you	12. Quel âge as-tu?
				13. It hurts, it doesn't hurt	13. J'ai mal à, je n'ai pas mal à
				14. Singing jumping fingers	14. Les doigts chantent, les doigts jouent
				15. Hey, little hand	15. Hé, les mains!
				16. Guess whose voice	16. Devine par la voix

1	2	3	4	5
Topic 3: My family				***S: A baby in the familiy*** / ***S: Le bébé dans la famille***
Introducing	The members of the family	(e)	J'ai /il/ elle a + substantif frère / soeur	1. I love daddy, I love mummy / 1. J'aime papa, j'aime maman
Giving characteristic features	Quality adjectives	(s)	Je suis /il/ est est + adjectif	2. The Tortoise / 2. La tortue
Describing	Clothes	(b)	Qu'est-ce que tu mets? il /elle/ + vb	3. My aunt / 3. Ma tante 4. My brother / 4. Mon frère 5. Fetch the ball / 5. Attrape la balle! 6. Clear the playground / 6. Nettoie le terrain de jeu! 7. The truck / 7. Le camion 8. Family relay / 8. Le relais de famille 9. What has changed / 9. Qu'est-ce qui a changé! 10. The house / 10. La maisonnette 11. The swing / 11. La balançoire 12. Let's put the fingers to sleep / 12. Faisons dormir les doigts 13. Colour houses / 13. Des maissonnettes en couleurs 14. Hopscotch / 14. La marelle
			Je /il/ elle + mettre + vêtement	
Topic 4: My friends - children, pets, plants, toys				***S: Aliens*** / ***S: Les extra-terrestres***
Describing	Children	(ϕ)	Qu'est-ce que tu /il/ elle + avoir?	1. Fashonet / 1. Fachonette 2. Seeds / 2. Des graines 3. A good friend / 3. Un cher ami 4. Friends / 4. Des amis 5. Bunnies / 5. Des lapins 6. Cabbages / 6. Du chou 7. My kitten / 7. Mon chat 8. The spinning top / 8. La toupie 9. Leap Bunny / 9. Saute, lapin! 10. Ball at the wall / 10. Balle au mur 11. Two camels / 11. Deux dromadaires 12. Wild animals and pets / 12. Des animaux domestiques et sauvages 13. Litle hands - little stars / 13. Petites mains-étoiles 14. A chain / 14. Chaînette
Localising	Pets	(oe)	Qu'est -ce que c'est?	
	Plants		Que + faire + animal?	
	Toys	(s)	Animal + verbe de mouvement	
			Plante + verbe d'action	
			Ou est...?	
			Substantif + est + preposition	

1	2	3	4	5	
	Topic 5: Seasons			***S: The animated picture***	***S: Le dessin vivant***
Describing	Weather Fruits Vegetables Colours Numbers (6 -12)	(a) (c) (f) (v)	Quel temps fait-il? Il fait + adj Il pleut/neige J'aime + substantif De quelle couleur est/sont...?	1. Spring 2. Clap, clap, handies 3. Autumn fruits 4. Apples 5. Rain 6. Cherries 7. A good shot EF 8. A school in the forest I 9. Beware of the season 10. The telephone 11. Jolly girls 12. A swallow without a nest 13. Spring flowers 14. At the market place 15. Slalom	1. Le printemps 2. Tapent, tapent les mains 3. Les fruits d'automne 4. Des pommes 5. La pluie 6. Des cerises 7. Le tir EF 8. Une école dans la forêt I 9. Fais attention a la saison 10. Le telephone 11. Des filles joyeuses 12. L'hirondelle sans nid 13. Des fleurs printanières 14. Au marché 15. Le slalom
	Topic 6: My homeland			***S: The New T.V.***	***S: Le nouveau televiseur***
Localising	Town Village House Market place Nursery School Zoo	(j) (n) (w)	Je /il/ elle habite à la /au/ + substantif je /elle/ + aller Je vais /à la/ au +substantif J' /il/elle/ achète Combien de kilos? Je vois /il/ elle voit + animal	1. The hey 2. The donkey 3. Through the hoop GH 4. In our country, and in faraway lands I 5. Fast, brave, clever 6. A lively folk dance 7. Wash, wash the plates 8. The eagle and the hey 9. Hunt the ribbon 10. Horse and carf 11. Heroes 12. Butt, butt, kids 13. Jump the rope	1. La poule 2. L'âne 3. La balle par le cerceau GH 4. Chez nous et dans les pays lointains I 5. Rapides, courageux, habiles 6. La ronde amusante 7. Lave, lave la vaisselle 8. L'aigle et la poule 9. Des chasseurs de rubans 10. Des chevaux et des charrettes 11. Des héros 12. Hop, les chèvreaux 13. La corde tournante

1	2	3	4	5
	Topic 7: I play sport			***S: Competition*** / ***S: Le dessin vivant***
Describing different sport Understanding commands	At the stadium In the mountains On the slide	(y) (oe)	Je fais du /de la/ + sport A vos marques! Prêt(s)! Halte! Joue/Jouez!	1. The Walk / 1. La promenade 2. The echo / 2. L'écho 3. Nice weather / 3. Le beau temps 4. Throw the ball over the rope / 4. La balle au-desus de la corde JKL 5. The competition / JKL 5. La compétition I 6. The relay race / I 6. La course de relais 7. Dolphins / 7. Les dauphins 8. Tusy-winsy spider / 8. Le gogo rampe 9. The little bean / 9. Le petit haricot 10. Sportsmen / 10. Les sportifs 11. Cyclist / 11. Les rameurs 12. Rowers / 12. Fais comme le guide! 13. Follow the leader
	Topic 8: My country			***S: A Bunch of Roses*** / ***S: Un bouquet de fleurs***
Describing beauty, traditions Expressing love	Bulgaria Relatives Rivers Plains Sea	(r)	Je suis /il/ elle est + nationalité J' il /elle habite en + pays (fém) J' il /elle/aime + substantif	1. My country / 1. La Patrie 2. Nibble-nibble / 2. Grignote, grignote 3. Dodge the ball / 3. Jeu traditionnel à la balle MN OPQ 4. In the mountains and at the seaside / MN OPQ 4. A la montagne et à la mer I 5. Mountaineers / I 5. Des alpinistes 6. Liile cocks / 6. Des coqs 7. The little mouse who cooked porridge / 7. La petite souris a fait de la bouillie 8. Help me light a fire, Granny / 8. Grand-mère aide-moi pour faire un bon feu! 9. Goody Bear / 9. L'ours 10. Orientation / 10. L'orientation 11. Rally / 11. Le rally 12. Fishing / 12. La pêche 13. Old McDonald had a farm / 13. Dans la ferme du grand-père

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1	2	3	4	5
Topic 9: My favourite occupation				
Telling preferences	Child's habitual activities Crafts Possessive adjectives	(E)	J'/il/elle/ aime + verbe je serai /il/ elle sera + métier Mon père /ma/ mère est + métier	**S: Carnival** 1. The Shepherd 2. The mouse and the cat 3. Hunters 4. Football for children PS TU 5. Carnival I 6. Builders 7. Squirrels 8. The file is filing 9. Bugs 10. Firefighters 11. Pots 12. Children and Bees 13. Oracle 14. Flying saucers
				S: Le carnaval 1. Le berger 2. La souris et le chat 3. Des chasseurs 4. Le football pour enfants PS TU 5. Le carnaval I 6. Les bâtisseurs 7. Les écureuils 8. La lime lime 9. Les bourdons 10. Les pompiers 11. Les pots 12. Des enfants et des abeilles 13. Un oracle 14. Des assiettes volantes
Topic 10: Holidays-in our country and in other countries				
Creetings for holidays	Christmas New Year Easter Spring holidays Sport days Months, Days of the Week	(oe)	Bonne fête! Bonne année! Bon anniversaire!	**S: Surprises** 1. Pickolet 2. Dwarfs 3. La-lura 4. The pastry 5. Basketball for children VMX 6. Sportsday I 7. A day in the forest 8. The broken record player 9. The naughty Billy-goat 10. Kukery 11. Granny Marta 12. Easter 13. The dog and the fox 14. The bicycle 15. The little ring
				S: Des surprises 1. Picoulete 2. Des nains 3. Lalura 4. La galette 5. Le basketball pour enfants VMX 6. Une fête sportive I 7. Une fête dans la forêt 8. Le tourne-disques cassé 9. Le bouc têtu 10. Des koukéris 11. La grand-mère Marta 12. Les Pâques 13. Le chien et le renard 14. Le vélo 15. La bague

1	2	3	4	5

Topic 11: I like travelling

1	2	3	4
Localising	Continents - Europe, Asia, Africa, America Vehicles	(E)	Je vais /il/elle/ va en + continent Je /il/elle/ voyage en + moyen de transport Bon voyage!

S: Excursion

1. The snail
2. The helicopter
3. The train
4. The travelling ball
5. Let's fight
6. Zoo
7. Rockets
8. Fly, fly, crow
9. Tourists
10. Directions
11. Foxy Doxy is running after her tail
12. The leaping circle
13. The blindfolded footballer
14. The lion and the monkeys

S: Une excursion

1. L'escargot
2. L'hélicoptere
3. Le train
4. La balle voyage
5. Frappe, frappe
6. Le zoo
7. Des fusées
8. Vole. vole corneille
9. Des touristes
10. Des orientations
11. Le renard poursuit sa queue
12. Le cercle sautant
13. Le footballeur aveugle
14. Le lion et le singe

Topic 12: I am going to be a schoolboy/schoolgirl

1	2	3	4
Expressing joy, satisfaction	School Classroom School aids The clock Having meals	Intona-tion Rhy-ming	Je serai /il/elle sera élève Qu'est-ce qu'il y a dans + sustantif? Quelle heure est-il? Il est ... heure(s) A quelle heure verbe + tu /il/elle?

S: Circus

1. The game
2. Marching
3. Jugglers with balls
4. The eagle
5. The merry alphabet
6. The new bag
7. The folk dance
8. The tunnel
9. The magician
10. The frightful man
11. Who is there?
12. Make a figure
13. Blindman's buff
14. The sweet

S: Des surprises

1. Le jeu
2. La marche
3. Des jongleurs avec des balles
4. Le bord
5. L'alphabet amusant
6. Le nouveau cartable
7. La ronde
8. Le tunnel
9. Le magicien
10. L'homme horible
11. Qui est là?
12. Fais une figure!
13. Jouer à cache- cache
14. Le bonbon

BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MODEL OF EARLY CHILDHOODS FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION THROUGH PLAYING GAMES

Aim: Favourable personal development of the child
Forms: Playing situations
Basic functional characteristics: universality, actuality, perspectivity, adaptivity, simplicity, attractivenees, activity, integrativity, orderliness, variability, efficiency

Prerequisites for hidh quality of interaction

Speaking abilities applied to real and imaginary personally important situations in playing and other activities

Playing games with active independently performed movements and actions

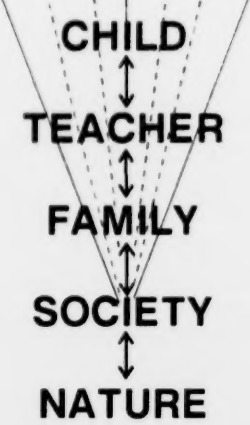

Fig. 1

Survey of the positive contribution of teachers and 4-6-year-old children in foreign language teaching through playing games

Indexes	Teachers			Children		
	Average number	P%	m_p	Average number	P%	m_p
1.1 Phonetics	13	92	15	127	68	6
1.2. Vocabulary - number of words	13,6	97	9	140	77	6
1.3. Grammar Structures	14	100		137	75	6
1.4. Application	14	100		163	89	4
2.1. General speech activity	14	100		180	98	2
2.2. General motor activity	11	79	22	132	72	6
3.1. Adaptation-readiness	9	64	26	170	92	4
3.2. Emotional satisfaction	10	71	24	175	96	2
TOTAL:	12,3	88	18	153	84	5

Table 2

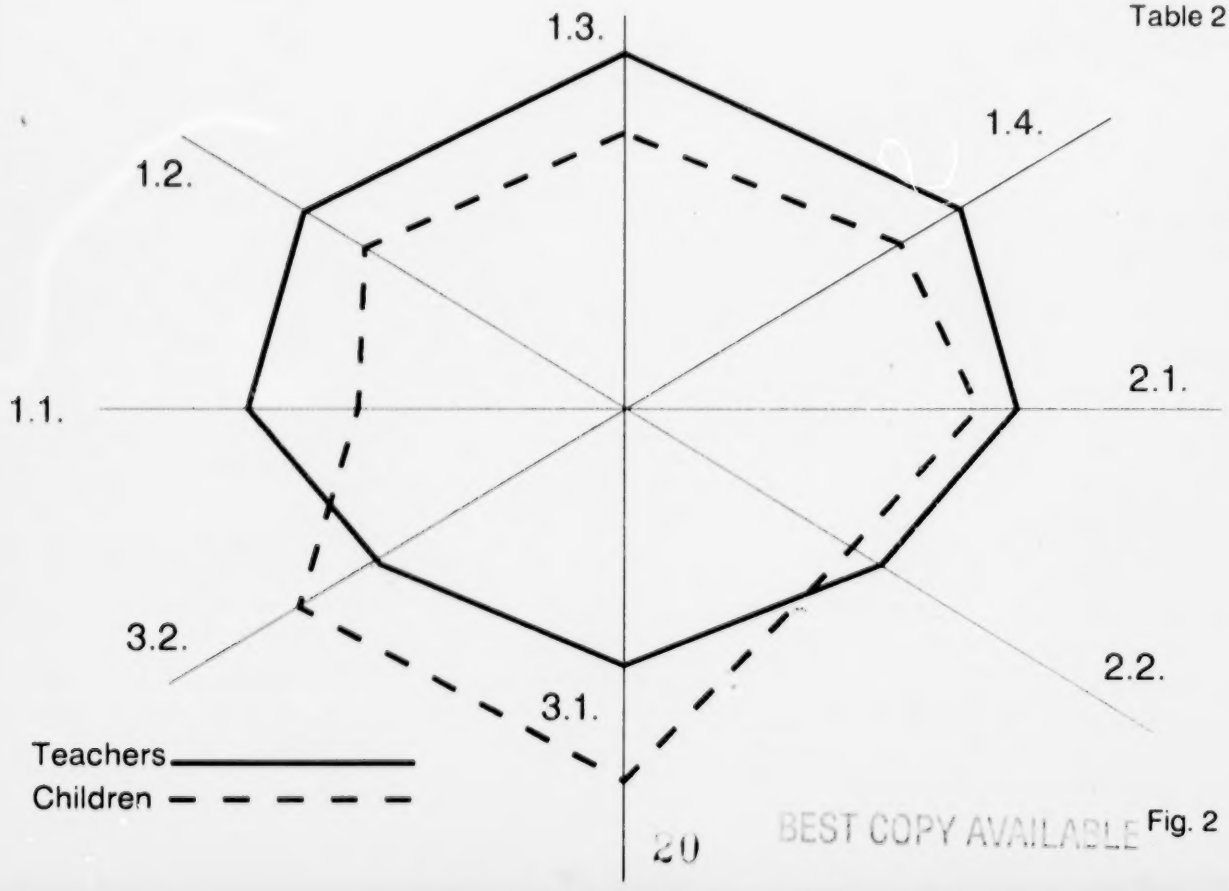

Fig. 2

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Contribution of the scientific research to the theory, the methods and the practice of the pre-school education

1. The pre-school education theory is enriched with a model of foreign language teaching of 4-6-year-old children through playing games. The model discloses and proves the opportunity of effective harmonious realization of the speaking and motor development of the child leading to the optimum development of their personality.

2. A system for optimizing the methods of preschool education and foreign language teaching through playing games is suggested. It is possible due to the permanent enhancing of the qualification of the teachers and actualising the connections between the theory, the methods and the practice as well as the teacher trainer (at the In-service Teacher Training Institute)-teacher-parents-child interactions.

3. A new way of interaction in the educational-teaching activites is ensured. It leads to the self-expression of the children for their easy active intergrative variative participation in the games, the result of which is the creation of a positive emotional basis for forming a lasting interest and for successful learning of the foreign language.

4. Conditions for complete living through their childhood as well as for good preparation of the child for managing the different school and life situations are ensured.

- A feeling for the foreign language learning is formed and schemes for easier and faster gaining of proficiency in the foreign language are formed.
- Personal necessities as well as their satisfaction through foreign language communication are provoked.
-The children extend their knowledge of the lifestyle and the culture of the countries of the target languages.
- The children are orientated to a lifestyle in conformity with nature and to acquiring a higher cultural level.
- The children's and the teacher's range of cultural knowledge is enlarged.

5. The teacher's job becomes easier and the quality of the pedagogical work in the foreign language teaching and the physical education of the children increase.

Professional References

Tanka Gueorguieva Anguelova is an associate professor in Theory and Methods of Physical education at the In-service Teacher Training Institute „A. Tosheva" Stara Zagora. In 1985 she defended a dissertation on the Role of games in training 5-6-year-old children to swim and became Doctor of Pedagogy. Part of her duties is to make contacts with teachers, students and children. Her main pedagogical and creative activites consist of four monographs, more than 40 publications, participation in science forums.

Tanka Anguelova's experimental activities include problems which concern:

- Development of the cognitive activities of pre-school age children through physical education of pre-shchool age children through playing games.
- Life in conformity with the laws of nature through swimming, touring and playing games.
- Improving the technology of the pedagogical interactions during the physical education process of pre—school age children.
- The Folklore in Bulgarian traditions and the Physical education of children nowadays.

Branimira Christova Le~~k~~kova is chief assistant in Methods of teaching French at the In-service Teacher Training Institute „A. Tosheva" Stara Zagora. So far she has written 3 monographs and has 20 publications on problems which concern:

- Games in teaching French as a foreign language in primary schools.
- The integral approach in teaching both French and fine arts (paintings and sculptures).
- Elementary and early childhood foreign language education.

Now Branimira Le~~k~~kova is making efforts to introduce foreign languages into nursery shools and primary schools. All the re-qualifications held and her two-years'experimental work prove it.

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